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*Office Memorandum* • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Acting Chief, Employee Services Division

DATE: 27 July 1954

FROM : Chief, Counseling Branch

SUBJECT: Six Month Report of Progress and Program Plans

A. During the period from 1 January through 30 June 1954 the Counseling Branch has made progress in the following areas:

I. In February 1954 the branch assumed responsibility for retirement counseling as an expanded adjunct to its regular employee counseling program. Interviews are held with employees who plan to retire to advise them of their retirement rights, privileges and benefits. In conjunction with this activity, close liaison is maintained with the Retirement Division of the Civil Service Commission. The branch has also assumed responsibility for the preparation of commendatory letters for the signature of the DCI to be presented to persons who have served honorably with the Agency until the time of their retirement.

II. In March 1954 a new board, called the Disposition Board, was created with the Chief, Counseling Branch as its Executive Secretary. The members of the Board are the Deputy Assistant Director for Personnel (Chairman), the Chief, Medical Staff, the General Counsel, and the Deputy Director of Security. The Assistant Director for Personnel serves as reviewing authority and submits a monthly report of Board activities to the Inspector General. The Board considers the disposition of such cases as those of Agency personnel who suffer from mental breakdown, certain emergency cases, certain disciplinary and security cases, and other employee problems which require careful, high-level adjudication and coordination of decisions between the various offices represented on the Board. Since many, if not most, of the cases are referred to this branch for action after the Board has reached its decision, it is considered a closely allied new responsibility of the Counseling Branch.

III. At the request of the DDCI, a new distribution system was devised in June 1954 to increase the usefulness of the Reports of Separation. Formerly, because of security restrictions, the Reports were not distributed across major Agency component lines. However the DDCI has determined that such a distribution should now be made when information of possible value to those components is elicited during exit interviews and recorded in Reports of Separation. The Counseling Branch has assumed responsibility for implementing this new procedure.

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V. In conjunction with the Program and Analysis Staff, new codes were developed for use in the Reports of Separation to incorporate factors which were hitherto not included in the delineation of reasons for employee turnover. This provides a more accurate means of recording with machine records the various turnover factors involving Agency personnel.

B. Listed below is a statistical summary of the major activities of this branch for the period 1 January through 30 June 1954.

I. Resignations Processed:

January.....	151
February.....	122
March.....	146
April.....	113
May.....	127
June.....	<u>136</u>

Total :795

Monthly Average :133

For each resignation processed a Report of Separation (Form 37-154) is prepared, a Final Payment Clearance Sheet (Form 34-30) is completed and a Request for Personnel Action (SF-52) is obtained for submission to the Processing and Records Division.

II. Leave Cases Processed:

January.....	21
February.....	25
March.....	33
April.....	26
May.....	25
June.....	<u>30</u>

Total :160

Monthly Average : 26

All requests for LWOP, including Maternity Leave, of 60 days or more duration which require the submission of SF-52 are processed by this branch. For each of these a Final Payment Clearance Sheet is completed as in the case of a resignation.

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### III. Counseling Cases:

January.....	17
February.....	21
March.....	23
April.....	19
May.....	24
June.....	<u>16</u>

Total :120

Monthly Average : 20

Included in the above are hardship, illness (mental and physical), disciplinary, individual adjustment problems and grievance cases. The statistics given above are approximate because of the difficulty of defining the specific nature of counseling cases which vary widely as to type and scope.

### IV. Death Cases:

January.....	3
February.....	2
March.....	1
April.....	0
May.....	0
June.....	<u>0</u>

Total : 6

Monthly Average : 1

Letters of condolence are prepared for signature of the DCI in each death case (except certain security categories) and contact with next-of-kin is established. Assistance is given in the preparation of claims for unpaid compensation, return of retirement deductions, etc. Referral of the case to the Insurance and Claims Branch, ESD, is made when line of duty is involved, when claims are filed with the BEC or when legal issues arise

### V. Retirement Cases:

February.....	5
March.....	<u>12</u>
April.....	9
May.....	14
June.....	<u>8</u>

5 month total :48

Monthly Average : 9.6

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(Since the retirement counseling function was not assigned to this branch until February 1954, the statistics above include only the five month period since that date). Interviews are held with employees who plan to retire to advise them of their retirement rights, privileges and benefits. In addition, at the time of the exit interview employees are advised of their retirement status. Persons who resign in absentia are provided with information and the necessary forms by mail. Close liaison is maintained with the Retirement Division, Civil Service Commission. The above figures do not include applications for service credit, voluntary contributions, applications for refunds or applications for death benefits, but indicate the numbers of specific interviews conducted with employees on retirement matters. In conjunction with this program, letters of appreciation for signature of the DCI are also prepared by this branch for presentation, as appropriate, to persons retiring from the Federal Service.

VI. Disposition Board Cases:

March.....	5
April.....	6
May.....	4
June.....	<u>0</u>

Total :15

The Disposition Board was formed at the direction of the Inspector General in February but was not formally convened until March. For a description of its purpose and activities see Section A-II of this report. In addition to the cases referred for action to this branch by the Board, this office also participated in a number of emergency or "crash" cases on its own initiative which were not of such a nature as to require Board action. The numbers involved are reflected elsewhere in this report under counseling and death cases.

VII. Miscellaneous Activities:

During this six month reporting period this branch engaged in other activities of a varied nature which have not been specifically delineated above. These include such matters as providing notary public service, preparation of special reports, projects and turnover studies, initiation of correspondence with employees who resign in absentia, and numerous liaison contacts with the Medical, Security, Legal, Finance and operating offices.

C. Program plans for the period from 1 July through 31 December for the Counseling Branch are based on the assumption that the total work load will remain approximately the same as for the period covered in the above report. However, it is anticipated that continued progress will be made to

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refine our procedures and improve the personnel relations services which we are charged with providing to Agency employees. More specifically, an effort will be made to effect the following improvements:

- I. Because of the limited number of personnel assigned to this office (currently two short of our authorized T/O) and new functions assigned to the branch in recent months, we have not been able to carry out, to the extent we have desired, some of the program plans indicated in the last six month report. Efforts will be made to do so in the forthcoming months. The Chief, ESD has indicated that one new person, at the clerical level, will be assigned to the branch in the near future. This will relieve some of the pressure now placed on the branch. In addition, we hope eventually to augment our staff by one professional person, to serve as Deputy Chief of the branch, to permit more opportunity for the Chief to visit the operating offices to assist in the resolution of employee and management problems at their source.
- II. It is anticipated that the projected physical move to new offices which is now partially completed, will bring more cohesion to our working area and provide improvements from a security viewpoint.
- III. It is expected that there will be wider utilization of the Reports of Separation to provide information relating to sources of employee dissatisfaction. This program has been augmented in recent months by the authorization to provide turnover information across the major Agency component lines (see Section A-III) and it is expected that this program will expand in the coming months.
- IV. Because of the extensive research required and the relatively little time available to our professional counselors, it has not been possible to carry on as adequate a program as we wish in the area of turnover studies. However, we have initiated such a study at the present time as a part-time assignment of two counselors and expect to complete at least one report of turnover trends during the forthcoming six months period.



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